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Extensions of country programmes in the Africa Region

Note by the Executive Director

Summary

The present note contains information on the one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Niger and Nigeria. It also contains information on the two-year extension of the country programme for Botswana.

In accordance with established procedures, the Executive Director approves the first one-year extension of a country programme, while requests for extensions for a second year or two-year extensions are submitted to the Executive Board for approval.

The Executive Board may wish to take note of the one-year country programme extensions for Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Niger and Nigeria, as indicated in table 1, and approve the two-year extension of the country programme for Botswana, as indicated in table 2.

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Table 1. One-year country programme extensions approved by the Executive Director

Country	Original programme period	Year proposed for extension	Reason and explanation		
			United Nations harmonization	In-country political development	Implementation and/or other issues
Burundi	2005-2007	2008	The one-year extension is being sought by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG)Executive Committee agencies to: (a) align the respective country programmes with the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi and the priority peace consolidation programme, 2007-2008; and (b) harmonize the programmes with the current poverty reduction strategy paper, which covers 2006-2008.	Security Council resolution 1719 established a United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi as of January 2007, to assist the ongoing peace-consolidation process. The Government prepared a priority peace consolidation programme, 2007-2008, which was endorsed by the Peacebuilding Commission and which is being funded through the Peacebuilding Fund.	The United Nations integrated strategy for peace consolidation in Burundi, 2007-2008, complements the priority peace consolidation programme of the Government. The strategy incorporates the priorities of Security Council resolution 1719 and the revised United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). Implementation will be undertaken through a number of joint programmes that involve units in the United Nations Secretariat and United Nations organizations. The one-year extension of the UNFPA country programme will: (a) place increased emphasis on youth health and life skills; (b) make preparations for a population census in 2008; and (c) implement a joint programme to combat gender-based violence and strengthen the capacities of women as peacebuilding agents. The current country programme provides an adequate framework for this to occur.

Table 1 (Cont'd). One-year country programme extensions approved by the Executive Director

Country	Original programme period	Year proposed for extension	Reason and explanation		
			United Nations harmonization	In-country political development	Implementation and/or other issues
Côte d'Ivoire	2003-2007	2008	The harmonization of programme cycles is planned for 2009. The UNDG Executive Committee agencies, including UNFPA, have therefore requested one-year extensions of their programmes through the end of 2008.	Since September 2002, Côte d'Ivoire has faced a socio-political crisis that has had serious repercussions on the socio-economic conditions of the country. General elections, planned for 2005, were postponed twice; they are now scheduled for October 2007. With regard to the programming process, efforts to obtain improved data are under way. Preparatory activities for the fourth national population and housing census (2008) are ongoing. The Government is working to update and validate the poverty reduction strategy paper. The United Nations country team has therefore agreed with the Government to postpone the harmonized programme cycle to 2009.	There is a need for continued assistance in reproductive health, population and development, and gender. The one-year extension of the country programme will ensure continuity in UNFPA support, in order to respond to pressing needs in reproductive health, including HIV/AIDS; population and development; and gender. UNFPA will direct programme support to these priority areas and will also focus on decentralized activities. UNFPA will open an office in the central part of the country and will have sub-offices and focal points in other intervention districts. The current country programme provides an adequate framework for these activities to occur.
Niger	2004-2007	2008	Harmonization of the United Nations programme cycle in Niger has been in place since 2004. The UNDG Executive Committee agencies, in accordance with the decision by the Government, have decided to extend their programme cycles for one year,	For the past 10 years, Niger has had a stable political situation as a result of its democratization process, including improving women's participation in decision-making. However, in 2005, the country faced a food crisis, due primarily to climatic conditions and an invasion of locusts that severely affected its agricultural production. Consequently, the implementation of the poverty reduction strategy, 2002-2005, was delayed by one year.	The one-year extension of the UNFPA country programme will provide an opportunity to reinforce awareness of population and development interactions. It will also ensure the effective integration of population variables and related reproductive health programmes into the new poverty reduction strategy paper, as per the revised national population policy.

Table 1 (Cont'd). One-year country programme extensions approved by the Executive Director

Country	Original programme period	Year proposed for extension	Reason and explanation		
			United Nations harmonization	In-country political development	Implementation and/or other issues
Niger (cont'd)	2004-2007	2008	through 2008, in order to seek coherence and alignment with the second phase of the national poverty reduction strategy paper that is being developed.	Data collection for major research studies was also delayed, and the publication of data was issued in late 2006. The Government therefore decided that its second poverty reduction strategy paper will cover the period 2007-2011.	The Government is currently developing a national policy to reduce gender inequities that will constitute an important dimension of the new poverty reduction strategy. The current country programme provides an adequate framework for UNFPA activities during the coming year.
Nigeria	2004-2007	2008	Harmonization of the United Nations programme cycle in Nigeria has been in place since 2004. The UNDG Executive Committee agencies, in accordance with the Government, have decided to extend their programme cycles for one year, through 2008, in order to align them with the second phase of the national poverty reduction strategy paper that is currently being developed.	Nigeria has made noticeable progress in macroeconomic and socio-economic stabilization, as well as in structural reforms, while strengthening accountability mechanisms and institutions. The government reform agenda has created an enabling environment for economic growth and social development. The political transition process began in 2006, and national and state elections are scheduled for April 2007. A new administration is due to take office at the end of May 2007. A successful election will deepen and expand the reform process initiated by the current administration.	The one-year extension of the country programme will enable UNFPA to consolidate the gains of previous programmes to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. It will enable UNFPA to use the recently released census figures, which indicate a high population growth rate (3.2 per cent), to emphasize the need for population, reproductive health and gender issues to be at the centre of government efforts to reduce poverty (as articulated in phase II of government poverty reduction strategy). UNFPA will also provide assistance in processing, collating and producing local government population figures and in analysing the 2006 population and housing census and the post-enumeration survey. The current country programme provides an adequate framework for these activities.

Table 2. Extensions of country programmes for which the approval of the Executive Board is sought

Country	Original programme period	Year proposed for extension	Reason and explanation		
			United Nations harmonization	In-country political development	Implementation and/or other issues
Botswana	2002-2007	2008-2009	The current UNDAF ends in 2007, while the national development plan covers the period 2003-2009. In order to align itself with the government planning process, the UNDAF will be extended by two years. Individual country programmes of the UNDG Executive Committee agencies will therefore require two-year extensions, through 2009. During the UNDAF extension period, the United Nations country team will put in place the building blocks for "one team, one vision". Because of its middle-income status, Botswana is not attracting as many donors as it has in the past. Therefore, the Government is seeking stronger and more effective partnerships with the United Nations, particularly in the areas of HIV/AIDS, poverty, environment, gender and governance.	The middle-income status of the country has resulted in many donor agencies shifting their attention to more needy countries. In addition, the HIV/AIDS scourge has forced the Government and its development partners to concentrate resources on HIV/AIDS, to the detriment of other health priorities. Hence, the country still falls short of achieving the goals of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the Millennium Development Goals. Other areas of concern are gender-based violence; rising unemployment, especially among youth, resulting in alcohol, drug and other substance abuse; teenage pregnancies, leading to unsafe abortions; crime; and migration.	UNFPA support is sought in the areas of data for development; sexual and reproductive health, including reproductive health commodity security; HIV prevention; the integration of sexual and reproductive health and HIV services; and gender concerns, especially gender-based violence and male involvement in sexual and reproductive health. The country programme extension will continue to address: (a) the availability of disaggregated data to monitor ICPD goals, selected Millennium Development Goals and other key development indicators (maternal mortality and gender-based violence, for example); (b) prevention of teenage pregnancies; (c) prevention of HIV/AIDS and the feminization of the epidemic; and (d) prevention of gender-based violence. UNFPA will lead in the area of behaviour change communication. The current country programme provides an adequate framework for these activities to occur.